

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application. According to the Examiner, all of the claims are readable on the elected species. By this amendment, claims 2, 5-13, 15 and 20 are amended for the Examiner's consideration. The above amendments do not add previously presented matter to the application and are fully supported by the specification. Reconsideration of the rejected claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings were objected for as not including the features of claim 20. Claim 20 has been amended, in accordance with the comments below. The objection to the drawings should now be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st paragraph. Claims 2, 4-8 and 10-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 2, 6-13 and 15 are amended in order to provide proper antecedent basis for features of the claimed invention. Claim 20 is amended for the sole reason of expediting allowance of the application. The features originally recited in claim 20 are not disclaimed from protection, from at least the interpretation of the base independent claim. The original features of claim 20 are well supported in the

specification, for example, at page 7, lines 14-20. Specifically, the specification discloses, in part:

In addition to the third aspect, according to the fourth aspect of the present invention, there is provided a vacuum pressure booster, wherein a recessing and a protruding portion elastically engaged with each other are formed on respective engaging faces between the pair of valve holders.

It is clear from this language that the recessing and a protruding portion can be elastically engaged with each other on either of the front or rear valve holders.

Accordingly, the original language of claim 20 does not introduce any new matter.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection over claims 2, 4-8, 10-18 and 20 be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the rejection, the Examiner asserts that Figure 4 of U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 shows pertinent features related to the claimed invention. For example, the Examiner is of the opinion that Figure 4 of U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 shows an annular recess portion 131a and an annular protruding portion 131b of the pair of cylinder holding portions are elastically engaged with each other, noting spring 29b.

This does not appear to be accurate as described with reference to Figure 4, reproduced below.

Fig. 4

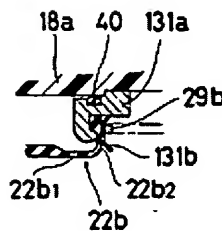


Figure 4 is very similar to Figure 2, as previously discussed. As shown in Figure 4, a circular groove is formed on the outer circumference of the first retainer 131a and an O-ring 40 is installed on the circular groove provided in the first retainer 131a. The first retainer 131a is secured in an air-tight manner to the cylindrical portion 18a of the piston body 18 through the O-ring 40 by pressing. Also, Figure 4 shows a circular ring 131b, provided as a second retainer, secured to the inner circumference of the tubular portion of the first retainer 131a by pressing. However, the first retainer 131a does not include a protruding part, as recited in the claimed invention, nor does the circular ring 131b include a recessed portion, as recited in the claimed invention.

Instead, it is Applicants opinion that the circular ring 131b is pressed to the first retainer 131a by the spring member 29b. Also, these features are not a protruding and recess portion. In contrast, in the present invention, members 35A and 35B are engaged at the annular recess and protruding portions.

In fact, Applicants submit that the configuration of U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 is, by far, more difficult to manufacture and assemble than that of the claimed invention. For example, the recess and protruding portion of the claimed invention allow an easy and simple "snap-like" fit mating, which is elastically engaged. The configuration of the claimed invention also uses less material, which reduces costs. Additionally, the mating of the claimed invention is very secure, used in combination with the remaining features of the claimed invention. In contrast, the configuration of U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 includes more material and would thus be more costly to manufacture. Also, this configuration clearly shows that both of the rings 131a and 131b have smooth surfaces which cannot be equated with nor is it similar to that of the claimed protruding and recess mating portions of the claimed invention.

Thus, in contrast to U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125, in the claimed invention, the booster includes a valve body which has an annular attaching bead portion 34b airtightly attached to the valve cylinder and an expansion cylinder portion 34c extending in the axial direction from the attaching bead portion. An annular valve portion communicates with a forward end portion of the expansion cylinder portion and is opposed to the vacuum pressure introducing valve seat and the atmosphere introducing valve seat so as to seat thereon. The attaching bead portion is tightly held between a pair of cylindrical holding portions 35Ab and 35Bb formed in a pair of valve holders attached to the valve cylinder. A cylindrical connecting portion 35Ac of the front holder is engaged with an outer circumference of an engaging portion 35Bc

of a rear valve holder of the pair of valve holders. An annular recess portion 50 and an annular protruding portion 51 of the pair of cylinder holding portions are elastically engaged with each other. These features are not shown in the reference applied by the Examiner.

Applicants also submit that the Examiner does not appear to specifically consider claims 13-20, as it relates to U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125. In any event, Applicants submit that the features of the added claims 13-20 in the previous response are distinguishable over, for example, U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125. As to independent claim 19, U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 does not show the attaching bead portion tightly held between a pair of cylindrical holding portions formed in a front valve holder and a rear valve holder, where the front valve holder includes a connecting portion that is positioned between the valve cylinder and an engaging portion of the rear valve holder. Again, none of the embodiments of U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 show such a feature, as discussed above.

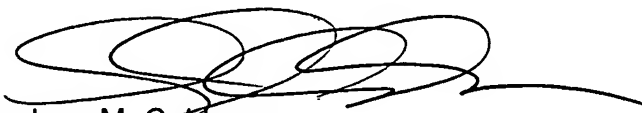
In addition, in U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125, there is simply no suggestion or showing of there is a recess portion and protruding portion being providing on the engaging faces of the components (claims 5 and 17). Instead, again, U.S. Patent No. 5,190,125 shows a different configuration. In such a configuration, one component engages a mating component, resulting in two surfaces of each component mating with two surfaces of the mating component.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection over claims 1-20 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicant hereby makes a written conditional petition for extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew M. Calderon
Registration No. 38,093

Greenblum & Bernstein, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, Virginia 20191
Telephone: 703-716-1191
Facsimile: 703-716-1180